



State of Connecticut

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**Testimony in Support of *HB 6903*
Government Administration & Elections Committee
Monday, March 16, 2015
1:00 PM in Room 2A of the LOB**

Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila, Senator McLachlan, Representative Smith and members of the Government Administration & Elections Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 6903 An Act Subjecting Foundations of Public Institutions of Higher Education to the Freedom of Information Act.

As you are all aware, transparency at the UCONN Foundation is one of the major topics that will be addressed this session. Raised Bill 6903 seeks to increase openness, transparency and accountability with regard to Foundation activities by declaring that the Foundation is a "*public agency*" subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

A recent OLR report indicated that Connecticut is unique among northeast states in providing a blanket FOI exemption for its public university foundation. Making the Foundation subject to FOI laws would put them on even footing with similar university foundations. This proposal would also allow the foundation to withhold the identity of individual donors who request anonymity.

I believe the concept in HB 6903 is fair and reasonable. It would simply require that the UConn Foundation be treated like all public agencies under our FOI laws.

I appreciate your committee's willingness to take on this subject, and I know there are other bills with equally good ideas. I look forward to working with all of you on this issue. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today

Len Fasano
Senate Minority Leader